Year 11 English: Gattaca Character Study

By: Mira Oliva 11F

Vincent Freeman (Ethan Hawke)

* While growing up, Vincent was constantly told that he couldn’t do what he wanted in life. He was told that because of his poor genes, that he was not fit enough to achieve great things in the world. These negative comments from people, including his parents, were what drove Vincent into desperately wanting to achieve. He wanted to show that achieving wasn’t all about genes and that perfection doesn’t mean anything when it comes to a man’s dreams.
* Even though Vincent’s life as Jerome is based on deception, I think that he is an honest person. Despite lying about who he is, he believes that he could achieve great things even with what is running through his veins. He accepted the fact that he was thought of as an ill person, but he still strived to give everything his all.
* Even though Vincent’s relationship with Irene starts to blossom, I don’t think it was ever really enough to keep him on earth, because Vincent worked so hard to get where he had gotten. I think that his dream was too powerful and that nothing would ever overcome it because of all the things that he went through in life. Love or “blossoming” love, was never enough. Besides I didn’t really get that romantic connection between them, because Vincent was far more interested in his dreams and Irene was too concerned about her genetics and how no man would ever love her, because of her “chances of getting Heart disease”.

Irene Cassini (Uma Thurman)

* I think that she would’ve been disappointed after getting the results back, because Valids don’t usually go violent behaviour and are programed without this emotion, so when she found out that the eyelash was in fact Vincent’s, it probably would’ve taken her aback, making her question society and their ways.
* Irene becomes an accomplice in Vincent’s deception and flight to space because even as she finds that Vincent was lying about who he was, she still stuck around and helped Vincent in his journey to space. She looked out for him and accompanied him along the way.

Jerome Eugene Morrow (Jude Law)

* Even though Jerome was given all of the advantages and privileges, he was still suicidal because, even though he was made and modified to be the best, he still came out second after the long haul. I think that all the pressure and expectations got a bit too much for him which led him to this suicidal part of his life.

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| ADVANTAGES | DISADVANTAGES |
| * They become great friends almost to the extent that they actually seem like brotherly figures to each other. * They give each other purpose. * In what Vincent lacked, Jerome made up for and vice versa. | * Without one another they become nothing. E.G. when Vincent leaves to go into space, Jerome kills himself, because he has no purpose anymore in life anymore. |

Dr Lamar (Xander Berkeley)

* Lamar allows Vincent onto the spaceship at the end of the film, because he has a son who is also an invalid and dreams of going into space. Vincent’s brave actions give him hope that one day, the world of Gattaca could be a different, better place, where everyone will be equal and have the same opportunities in the future, despite of their genetics.
* The significance of the story about Dr Lamar’s son and Vincent is that they have both been labelled the “inferior people” in Gattaca’s society. Vincent and Dr Lamar’s son were both born with a heart defect with a dream to go to space. It is also significant because the son looks up to Vincent and Vincent is the inspiration of the little boy’s dreams.

Antonio Freeman (Ellas Kosteas)

* The decision by Antonio to name his first-born son ‘Vincent” rather than the planned “Anton” says that he is a prideful man. He thinks that Vincent wasn’t good enough to wear his name. This also shows that he believes in Society’s belief of the genetic code. He was ashamed that he made such a “weak” child.
* I think that Antonio gave Vincent a better purpose to fight and prove everyone wrong. Vincent was sad that he didn’t get to wear his father’s name so he set about to shame his father into thinking otherwise. All Vincent wanted was for his father to see him as a “normal” fully functioning human being who could do what society told him he couldn’t.

Marie Freeman (Jayne Brooke)

* Yes, I do agree that Marie’s best interest was her family’s welfare and making sure that they get the best that they can. We are shown this when Marie and her husband are in the doctor’s office contemplating on whether their next child would be genetically modified or not. She doesn’t really see the whole purpose of this new technology and why it’s necessary; it’s as if she doesn’t totally agree with it. Marie also treats her children equally and doesn’t show favouritism despite their genetics.
* The knowledge about Vincent’s “invalidity”, she was more concerned and more alert of what Vincent was up to and was always worried about his safety. She was more careful and strict around him because she didn’t anything else to tamper with Vincent’s life span. We are shown this when we see Vincent as a younger boy falling over, and then Marie comes over to assess and comfort him as if he was a fragile skinny bone that could snap with one wrong move.

Anton Freeman (Loren Dean)

* Anton turned a blind eye to his brother’s suspected involvement during the investigation because he believed that Vincent wasn’t good enough or smart enough to get himself into Gattaca and be in this much trouble.
* Some of the qualities that Anton missed out on in his programmed birth and favoured upbringing that Vincent had been able to achieve were individuality, courage, determination and passion. This is proven when Vincent becomes a successful astronaut, while Anton is left in a middle-class job as a detective.